

REMINISCENCES OF KARL MARX

1818—1883

By

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This booklet contains the introduction to a similar (but shorter) collection on Marx published by Lawrence and Wishart, London, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of his death. We are giving longer extracts of the reminiscences of Marx, of Paul Lafargue and Wilhelm Liebknecht together with four letters of Engels.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE TO ENGLISH EDITION

ON March 17, 1883, when Karl Marx was buried in Highgate cemetery, only a handful of friends were gathered there to honour him. His name was unknown to the London working class. The International Workingmen's Association, founded and led by him, had ceased to exist eleven years before and was forgotten by the British trade unions which had once supported it. The only English organisation which was to some extent influenced by his teaching did not as yet call itself Socialist: another year passed before it adopted the title, Social Democratic Federation. The one completed volume of Marx's greatest work, *Capital*, published sixteen years before his death, had never been translated into English.

But there was no hesitation in the words spoken at the grave-side by Frederick Engels: 'On the 14th of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think.' 'His name will endure through the ages, and so also will his work.'

Engels spoke with the authority and confidence born of forty years' closest friendship and intellectual intimacy, during which he had grasped, as no other man had, the full significance of Marx's teachings. His estimate of their value to the world was that of a fellow scientist and revolutionary comrade-in-arms; and history has proved that he was right.

Today it is no longer a handful of people who honour Marx's memory. In spite of every effort of calumny and distortion by bourgeois intellectuals and working-class renegades, growing numbers of people in every country of the world recognise in Marxism the science of the present and the future. This recognition has not been easily won. At each stage it has been fought for by the ablest and most courageous men and women in the working-class movement, but there have been periods in the history of every country when the revolutionary content of his teaching has been almost extinguished.

Today it burns bright and inextinguishable. The mighty beacon of the Soviet Union draws the attention of the whole world; and daily more men and women, workers by hand and by brain, are coming to understand that the heroism of the Soviet people is no accident of race and historical chance,

but derives from the force and truth of Marx's revolutionary teaching. For it was the Russian people who, under the leadership of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party which he formed, first carried the revolutionary theory of Marx into triumphant practice. For nearly twenty-five years, from November 7, 1917 to June 22, 1941, they have been engaged in the mightiest work of construction that history has known : Stalin, Lenin's greatest disciple, led the Russian workers and peasants forward to Socialism, the first stage on the way to Communism, that future world society which Marx foretold with the confidence of a scientist and for which he strove with the passion of a great revolutionary. Today, when together with the common people of the whole world they are threatened by the scourge of fascism, it is Stalin and the Army of the Socialist State who are leading the forces of liberation in the struggle for the future of humanity.

REMINISCENCES OF MARX

PAUL LAFARGUE*

I

THE first time I ever saw Karl Marx was in February 1865. The International had been founded on September 28, 1864, at a meeting in St. Martin's Hall. I came from Paris to bring him news of the progress made there by the young organisation. Monsieur Tolain, now a senator of the bourgeois republic and one of its representatives at the Berlin Conference, had given me a letter of introduction.

I was twenty-four years old. Never in my life shall I forget the impression made on me by that first visit. Marx was in poor health at the time, and was hard at work upon the first volume of *Capital* (published two years later, in 1867). He was afraid he might be unable to finish it, and he gladly received young people, "for," he used to say, "I must train up men who will continue the communist propaganda after I am gone."

Karl Marx was one of those rare men who are fitted for the front rank both in science and in the public life. So intimately did he combine these two fields that we shall never understand him unless we regard him simultaneously as man of science and as socialist fighter. While he was of opinion that every science must be cultivated for its own sake and that when we undertake scientific research we should not trouble ourselves about the possible consequences, nevertheless, he held that the man of learning if he does not wish to degrade himself, must never cease to participate in public affairs—must not be content to shut himself up in his study or his laboratory, like a maggot in a cheese, and to shun the life and the social and political struggles of his contemporaries.

* *Paul Lafargue* (1842-1911). Member of the First International, one of the founders of the French Labour Party and one of the most important leaders of the French Labour movement at the time of the Second International. His reminiscences were published in the *Neue Zeit* in September 1890.—*Ed.*

"Science must not be a selfish pleasure. Those who are so lucky as to be able to devote themselves to scientific pursuits should be the first to put their knowledge at the service of mankind." One of his favourite sayings was, "Work for the world."

Though he deeply sympathised with the suffering of the working class, what had led him to the communist standpoint was not any sentimental consideration, but the study of history and political economy. He maintained that every unprejudiced person uninfluenced by private interests and not blinded by class prejudices, must perforce come to the same conclusion. But if he studied the economic and political development of human society without any preconceived notions, he wrote only with the definite intention of spreading the results of his studies, and with the firm determination to provide a scientific foundation for the socialist movement, which down to his day had been lost in utopian mists. As far as public activity was concerned, he took part in this only in order to work on behalf of the triumph of the working class, whose historic mission it is to establish communism as soon as it has attained to the political and economic leadership of society. In like manner the mission of the bourgeoisie as soon as it rose to power was to break the feudal bonds which hampered the development of agriculture and industry; to inaugurate free intercourse for commodities and human beings, and free contract between employers and workers; to centralise the means of production and exchange; and to prepare the material and intellectual elements of communist society.

Marx did not restrict his activities to the land of his birth. "I am a citizen of the world," he would say, "and I work wherever I happen to be." In actual fact, he played a prominent part in the revolutionary movements that developed in the countries (France, Belgium, England) to which events and political persecution drove him.

But at my first visit, when I saw him in his study in Maitland Park Road, he appeared before me, not as the indefatigable and unequalled socialist agitator, but as the man of learning. From all parts of the civilised world, party comrades flocked to his study in order to consult the master of socialist thought. This room has become historical. Anyone who wants to realise the intimate aspects of Marx's intellectual life must become acquainted with it. It was situated on the first floor, well lighted by a broad window overlooking the park. On both sides of the fireplace and opposite the window were crowded bookshelves, on the top of which packets of newspapers and manuscripts were piled up to the ceiling. On one side of the window stood two tables, likewise loaded with

miscellaneous papers, newspapers, and books. In the middle of the room, where the light was best, was a small and plain writing table, three feet by two, and a wooden armchair. Between this chair and one of the book-shelves, facing the window, was a leather-covered sofa on which Marx would occasionally lie down to rest. On the mantelpiece were more books, interspersed with cigars, boxes of matches, tobacco jars, paperweights, and photographs of his daughters, his wife, Frederick Engels and Wilhelm Wolff. Marx was a heavy smoker. "Capital will not bring in enough money to pay for the cigars I smoked when I was writing it," he told me. But he was still more spendthrift in his use of matches. So often did he forget his pipe or his cigar that he had constantly to be relighting it, and would use up a box of matches in an incredibly short time.

He would never allow anyone to arrange (really, to disarrange) his books and papers. The prevailing disorder was only apparent. In actual fact, everything was in its proper place, and without searching he could put his hand on any book or manuscript he wanted. Even when conversing, he would often stop to show a relevant passage or figure in the book itself. He was at one with his study, where the books and papers were as obedient to his will as were his own limbs.

He took no account of external symmetry when arranging his books. Quarto and octavo volumes and pamphlets were placed side by side; he arranged his books not according to size but according to content. To him books were intellectual tools, not luxuries. "They are my slaves," he would say, "and must serve my will." He had scant respect for their form, their binding, the beauty of paper or printing; he would turn down the corners of the pages, underline passages, and cover the margins with pencil marks. He did not make notes in his books, but could not refrain from a question mark or a note of exclamation when an author kicked over the traces. His system of underlining enabled him to re-find with great ease any desired passage. He had the habit, at intervals of some years, of re-reading his notebooks and the marked passages in the books he had read, in order to refresh his memory—which was extraordinarily vigorous and accurate. From early youth he had trained it in accordance with Hegel's advice of memorising verses in an unfamiliar tongue.

He knew Heine and Goethe by heart, and would often quote them in conversation. He read the poets constantly, selecting authors from all the European languages. Year after year he would read Aeschylus again in the original Greek, regarding this author and Shakespeare as the two greatest dramatic geniuses the world has ever known. He had

made an exhaustive study of Shakespeare, for whom he had an unbounded admiration, and whose most insignificant characters, even, were familiar to him. There was a veritable Shakespeare cult in the Marx family, and the three daughters knew much of Shakespeare by heart. Shortly after 1848, when Marx wished to perfect his knowledge of English (which he could already read well), he sought out and classified all Shakespeare's characteristic expressions; and he did the same with some of the polemical writings of William Cobbett, for whom he had a great esteem. Dante and Burns were among his favourite poets, and it was always a delight to him to hear his daughters recite Burns' satirical poems or sing Burns' love songs.

Cuvier, an indefatigable worker and one of the great masters of science, when director of the Paris Museum, had a number of workrooms installed for his personal use. Each of these rooms was devoted to a particular branch of study, and for this purpose was equipped with the necessary books, instruments, anatomical accessories, etc. When wearied by some particular occupation, Cuvier would move on to the next room, finding that a change of mental work was just as good as a rest. Marx was just as untiring a worker as Cuvier, but he had not, like him, the means for the provision of several workrooms. He rested himself by pacing up and down the room, so that between door and window the carpet had been worn threadbare along a track as sharply defined as a foot-path through a meadow. Sometimes he would lie down on the sofa and read a novel; he often had two or three novels going at the same time, reading them by turns—for, like Darwin, he was a great novel-reader. He had a preference for eighteenth-century novels, and was especially fond of Fielding's *Tom Jones*. The modern novelists who pleased him best were Paul de Kock, Charles Lever, the elder Dumas and Sir Walter Scott, whose *Old Mortality* he considered a masterpiece. He had a predilection for tales of adventure and humorous stories. The greatest masters of romance were for him Cervantes and Balzac. *Don Quixote* was for him the epic of the decay of chivalry, whose virtues in the newly rising bourgeois world became absurdities and follies. His admiration for Balzac was so profound that he had planned to write a criticism of *La Comedie Humaine* as soon as he should have finished his economic studies. Marx looked upon Balzac, not merely as the historian of the social life of his time, but as a prophetic creator of character types which still existed only in embryo during the reign of Louis Philippe, and which only reached full development under Napoleon III, after Balzac's death.

Marx could read all the leading European languages, and

could write in three (German, French and English) in a way that aroused the admiration of all who were well acquainted with these tongues; he was fond of saying, "A foreign language is a weapon in the struggle of life." He had a great talent for languages, and this was inherited by his daughters. He was already fifty years old when he began to learn Russian. Although the dead and living languages already known to him had no close etymological relation to Russian, he had made such progress in six months as to be able to enjoy reading in the original the works of the Russian poets and authors whom he especially prized: Pushkin, Gogol and Shchedrin. His reason for learning Russian was that he might be able to read certain official reports of investigations—which the government had suppressed because the revelations they contained were so appalling. Some devoted friends had managed to procure copies for Marx, who was certainly the only economist of Western Europe who had cognisance of them.

Besides the reading of poetry and novels, Marx had recourse to another and very remarkable means of mental relaxation, *viz.*, mathematics, of which he was exceedingly fond. Algebra even gave him moral consolation; and he would take refuge in it during the most painful moments of a storm-tossed life. In the days of his wife's last illness, he found it impossible to go on in the usual way with his scientific work, and his only escape from the thought of her sufferings was to immerse himself in mathematics. At this period of spiritual agony he wrote an essay upon the infinitesimal calculus, which, according to the reports of mathematicians who know it, is of the first importance, and is to be published in his collected works. In the higher mathematics he could trace the dialectical movement in its most logical and at the same time in its simplest form. According to his way of thinking, a science was only really developed when it had reached a form in which it could make use of mathematics.

Marx's library, comprising more than a thousand volumes laboriously collected in the course of a lifetime of research, was insufficient for his needs; and for many years he was a regular attendant at the British Museum Reading Room, whose catalogue he greatly prized. Even his opponents are compelled to admit that he was a man of profound and wide erudition; and this not merely in his own speciality of economics, but also in the history, philosophy and literature of all countries.

Although he invariably went to bed very late, he was always afoot between eight and nine in the morning. Having drunk a cup of black coffee and read his newspapers, he would go to his study and work there till two or three next morning—breaking off only for meals, and (when the weather

was fine) for a walk on Hampstead Heath. In the course of the day he slept for an hour or two on the sofa. As a young man, he had the habit of spending whole nights at work. For Marx, work had become a passion, and one so absorbing that it was apt to make him forget his meals. Not infrequently he had to be summoned again and again before he would come down to the dining room; and hardly had he finished the last mouthful before he was on his way back to his desk. He was a poor eater, and even suffered from lack of appetite, which he tried to combat by the stimulus of highly seasoned food, such as ham, smoked fish, caviare and pickles. His stomach had to pay for the colossal activity of his brain, to which, indeed, all his body was sacrificed. Thinking was his supreme enjoyment. I have often heard him quote from Hegel, the master of the philosophy of his youthful days, the saying: "Even the criminal thought of a scoundrel is grander and more sublime than the wonder of the heavens."

He must undoubtedly have had a very strong constitution for otherwise he could never have endured so unusual a way of living or such exhausting intellectual labours. He was, in fact, very powerfully built. A man above the average height, he had broad shoulders and a deep chest, and his limbs were well proportioned on the whole, though his legs were rather too short for his body (as is often the case among members of the Jewish race). If he had practised gymnastics, in his youth, he would have become an extremely powerful man. The only physical exercise he took was walking. He could walk for hours, and even climb hills, talking and smoking the whole time, without showing a sign of fatigue. It may be said that he did his work while walking in his study. Only for short intervals would he sit down at his desk in order to commit to paper what he had thought out while pacing the floor. He was fond, too, of conversing while thus engaged in walking, only pausing in his walk from time to time, when the discussion became lively or the conversation especially important.

For years it was my custom to join him in his evening strolls on Hampstead Heath, and it was during these walks through the fields that I acquired through him my education in economics. Without noticing it himself, he developed in these talks with me the whole of the first volume of *Capital* as he was writing it at the time. As soon as I got home I would, to the best of my ability, jot down the substance of what I had heard; but at first I found it very difficult to follow Marx's profound and complicated thought-process. Unfortunately I lost these invaluable notes, for after the Commune my papers in Paris and Bordeaux were seized and burnt by the

police. Especially do I regret the loss of the notes made one evening when Marx, with a characteristic abundance of proofs and reflections, had been expounding his brilliant theory of the development of human society. It was as if a veil had been lifted from my eyes. For the first time I clearly grasped the logic of universal history, and became able to refer to their material causes the phenomena of the evolution of society and ideas—phenomena which to outward seeming are so contradictory. I was dazzled by it, and this impression lasted for years. The theory had the same effect upon the Madrid socialists when I expounded it to the best of my poor abilities. It is the greatest of all Marx's theories, and unquestionably one of the greatest ever formulated by the human mind.

Marx's brain was armed with an incredible quantity of historical and scientific facts and philosophical theories, and he was amazingly skilled in making use of all this knowledge and observation which he had gathered during lengthy intellectual labour. At any time, and upon any conceivable topic, he could supply the most adequate answer anyone could possibly desire to any enquiry, an answer always accompanied by philosophical reflections of general significance. His brain resembled a warship which lies in harbour under full steam, being ready at a moment's notice to set forth into any of the seas of thought. Indubitably, *Capital* discloses to us a mind remarkable for its energy and rich in knowledge. But for me, as for all who have known Marx well, neither *Capital* nor any of his other writings exhibit the full extent of his knowledge or the full grandeur of his genius and knowledge. The man towered high above his writings.

I worked with Marx, I was nothing more than the writer to whom he dictated, but this gave me the opportunity of observing how he thought and wrote. For him, work was at once easy and difficult. It was easy because, whatever the theme, the apposite facts and reflections surged up in his mind in abundance at the first impulse; but this very abundance made the complete exposition of his ideas laborious and difficult.

Vico wrote: "Only for God, who knows all, is the thing a substance; for man, who knows externals merely, it is nothing more than a surface." Marx grasped things after the manner of the God of Vico; he did not see the surface only, but penetrated into the depths, examining all the constituent parts in their mutual interactions, isolating each of these parts and tracing the history of its development. Then he passed on from the thing to its environment, watching the effect of each upon the other. He went back to the origin of the object of study, considering the transformations, the evolutions and

revolutions through which it had passed, and tracing finally even the remotest of its effects. He never saw a thing as a thing-by-itself, out of touch with its setting; but an extremely complicated world in continual movement. His aim was to expound all the life of this world, in its manifold and incessantly changing actions and reactions. The writers of the school of Flaubert and De Goncourt complain of the difficulty of giving an accurate account of what we see; and yet that which they wish to describe is nothing more than the surface of which Vico spoke, nothing more than the impression they receive. Their literary task was child's play compared with that undertaken by Marx. He needed quite exceptional powers of thought to comprehend the reality; and not less exceptional talent for exposition, if he was to make intelligible to others what he wrote, altering it again and again, and he always felt that the presentation remained inadequate to the idea. One of Balzac's psychological studies, *Le chef d'œuvre inconnu* [*The Unknown Masterpiece*] which has been pitifully plagiarised by Zola, made a deep impression on him because it was in part a description of his own feelings. A talented painter is so tortured by the urge to reproduce exactly the picture which has formed itself in his brain that he touches and retouches his canvas incessantly, to produce at last nothing more than a shapeless mass of colours, which nevertheless to his prejudiced eye seems a perfect reproduction of reality.

Marx united both the qualities essential to a brilliant thinker. He was incomparable in his power of analysing an object into its constituent parts; and he was a master in the art of rebuilding this object, in all its details and in its various forms of development, and also in the art of discovering its inner connections. His method of demonstration does not consist in playing with abstractions as he has been accused of doing by economists who are incapable of thinking; he does not employ the device of the geometers who, having isolated their definitions from the surrounding world, then go on to deduce conclusions in a realm quite out of touch with reality. We do not find in *Capital* a unique definition, or a unique formula; what we find is a series of highly subtle analyses which bring out the most fleeting *nuances* and the most inconspicuous differences of degree. He begins by noting the obvious fact that the wealth of societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails consists of an enormous accumulation of commodities; commodities, concrete objects and not mathematical abstractions, are the elements or cells out of which capitalist wealth is built up. Marx now takes firm hold of the commodity, twists it in every direction, turns it inside out, and extracts its secrets from it one after another—

secrets of which the official economists have never had an inkling, and which are none the less more numerous and more profound than the mysteries of the Catholic faith. Having studied the commodity from every angle, he goes on to consider its relationships to other commodities, as shown in exchange; then he passes to its production, and to the historical prerequisites of its production. He contemplates the phenomenal forms of the commodity, and shows how it passes out of one form into another, how one form necessarily gives rise to another. The logical sequence of development of the phenomena is displayed with such consummate art that we might imagine Marx to have invented it; and yet it issues from reality, and is a reproduction of the actual dialectic of the commodity.

Marx always worked with extreme conscientiousness. He never gave facts or figures which he could not substantiate from the best authorities. In this matter he was not content with second-hand sources, but went always to the fountain head, however much trouble it might entail. Even for the verification of some subsidiary item he would pay a special visit to the British Museum. That is why his critics have never been able to convict him of an error due to carelessness, or to show that any of his demonstrations were based on facts which could not stand severe examination. His habit of consulting original sources led him to read the least known authors, who were quoted only by him. *Capital* contains such a number of quotations from unknown writers that it might be supposed they were introduced to make a parade of learning. But Marx was moved by a very different impulse. He said : "I mete out historical justice, and render to each man his due." He considered it his duty to name the author, however insignificant and obscure, who had first expressed a thought, or had expressed it more precisely than any one else.

His literary conscience was no less strict than his scientific conscience. Not merely would he never rely on a fact about which he was not quite sure, but he would not speak on a topic at all unless he had made a thorough study of it. He would not publish anything until he had worked over it again and again, until what he had written obtained a satisfactory form. He could not bear to offer half-finished thoughts to the public. It would have been most distressing to him to show one of his manuscripts before it had been finally revised. This feeling was so strong in him that he said to me one day he would rather burn his manuscripts than leave them behind him unfinished. His method of work often involved him in tasks the magnitude of which is hardly to be conceived by

the readers of his books. For instance, in order to write the twenty-odd pages of *Capital* dealing with English factory legislation he had worked through a whole library of blue-books containing the reports of special commissions of enquiry and of the English and Scottish factory inspectors. As the pencil markings show, he read them from cover to cover. He regarded these reports as among "the most important and significant of the documents available for the study of the capitalist mode of production; and he had so high an opinion of the men who had made them that he doubted whether it would be possible to find in any other nation "men as competent, as unbiased, and as free from respect of persons as are the English factory inspectors." This remarkable tribute will be found in the preface to the first volume of *Capital*.

Marx drew an abundance of facts out of these blue-books—which many of the members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords (to whom they were circulated) used only as targets in order to ascertain the power of their weapons by counting the number of pages the bullets would penetrate. Others sold them by weight as waste paper. That was the best use they could make of them, for it enabled Marx to get his copies cheap from a waste paper dealer in Long Acre. According to Professor Beasley, Marx was the man who most highly esteemed these English official enquiries, and was indeed the man who had made them known to the world. But Beasley did not know that as long ago as 1845 Engels had taken many extracts from the British blue-books for his treatise on *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*.

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Those who would know the man's heart and love it, that heart which beat so warmly beneath the outer wrappings of the scholar, had to see Marx when his books and manuscripts had been thrust aside—in the bosom of his family, and on Sunday evenings in the circle of his friends. At such times he was a most delightful companion, sparkling with wit and bubbling over with humour, one whose laugh came from the depths. His dark eyes would twinkle merrily beneath his bushy eyebrows when he listened to some bright sally or apt rejoinder.

He was a gentle, tender and considerate father. A favourite phrase of his was: "Children must educate their parents." His daughters loved him ardently, and in the relationship between him and them there was never a trace of paternal authority. He never ordered them about, being content to ask them to do him a favour, or to beg them not to do something

which he would rather they left undone. Yet seldom was a father's counsel more listened to than his. His daughters looked on him as their friend and behaved to him as to a playmate. They did not address him as "Father," but as "Moor"—a nickname which had been given him because of his dark complexion and his ebony locks and beard. On the other hand, as far back as 1848, when he was not yet thirty, to his fellow members of the Communist League he was "Father Marx."

He would spend hours playing with his children. They remember to this day the sea-fights and burning of whole fleets of paper boats, which he made for them and which he would then—amid jubilation—set fire to in a large bucket of water. On Sundays the girls would not allow him to work; he was theirs for the whole day. When the weather was fine, the whole family would go for a country walk, stopping at a wayside "pub" for a modest luncheon of bread and cheese with ginger beer. When the children were still quite small, he would shorten the miles for them by telling them stories without end, fantastic fairy tales invented as he went along and spun out to fit the length of the walk, so that his hearers forgot their fatigue. Marx had an incomparably rich poetic imagination, and his first literary efforts were poems. His wife treasured these youthful verses, but would not let anyone see them. Marx's parents had intended their son to become a man of letters or a university professor. In their view he degraded himself by devoting himself to socialist agitation and by occupying himself with the study of political economy (a subject then little esteemed in Germany).

Marx once promised his daughters that he would write them a play about the Gracchi. Unfortunately this scheme never ripened. It would have been interesting to see what "the knight of the class war," as he was called, would have made of the theme—a terrible and splendid episode in the class struggles of the ancient world. This was but one of many plans that were never carried out. For instance, he intended to write a work on logic, and another on the history of philosophy, the latter having been one of his favourite studies in earlier days. He would have needed to live a hundred to have a chance of writing all the books he had planned, and of presenting to the world a portion of the wealth with which his mind was stored.

Throughout his whole life, his wife was a companion in the truest, fullest sense of the word. They had known one another in childhood, and had grown up together. Marx was only seventeen when they were betrothed. They had to

wait nine years before their marriage in 1843, but thence-forward they were never separated until Frau Marx died, not long before her husband. Although born and brought up in a noble German family, no one could have had a more lively sense of equality than she. For her, social differences and distinctions did not exist. In her house, at her table, workmen in their working clothes were welcomed with as much politeness and cordiality as dukes or princes would have been. Many workers from all lands enjoyed her hospitality, and I am sure that none of those whom she received with such simple and unfeigned kindness ever dreamed that their hostess was descended in the female line from the Dukes of Argyll, or that her brother had been Minister of State to the king of Prussia. Nor were these things of any moment to her. She had left them all to follow her Karl; and she never regretted what she had done, not even in the days of their greatest want.

She had a serene and cheerful temperament. Her letters to her friends, effortless outpourings of her facile pen, were the masterly productions of a lively and original mind. Her correspondents regarded the days on which these letters arrived as days of rejoicing. Johann Philip Becker has published a number of them. Heine, the ruthless satirist, dreaded Marx's mockery, but he had a great admiration for the keen and sensitive intelligence of Frau Marx. When the pair stayed in Paris, he was a constant guest in their house. Marx had so much respect for his wife's intelligence and critical sense that (as he told me in 1866) he submitted all his manuscripts to her, and greatly valued her judgment. She copied his writings before they went to press.

Frau Marx had many children. Three of them died quite young during the phase of privation through which the family passed after the Revolution of 1848, when they were refugees in London living in two small rooms in Dean Street, Soho Square. I got to know only the three daughters of the family. While, in 1865, I was introduced to Marx, the youngest (now Mrs. Aveling) was a delightful child, more like a boy than a girl. Marx was wont to say that his wife had made a blunder about the sex when she gave Eleanor to the world. The two other daughters formed the most charming and harmonious contrast that can be conceived. The elder (now Madame Longuet) was of a swarthy complexion like her father, with dark eyes and raven locks; the younger (now Madame Lafargue) took after her mother, having a fair skin, rosy cheeks, and a wealth of curly hair, with a golden sheen, as if it concealed the setting sun.

In addition to those already named, there was another

important member of the Marx family, Helene Demuth by name. Of peasant birth, she had become a servant in the Westphalen family when quite young, long before Jenny von Westphalen married Karl Marx. When the marriage took place, Helene would not part from Frau Marx, but followed the fortunes of the Marx family with the most self-sacrificing devotion. She accompanied Marx and his wife in all their wanderings through Europe, and shared in their various expulsions. The practical spirit of the household, she knew how to make the best of the most difficult situations. It was thanks to her orderliness, thrift and mother-wit that the family never had to endure the worst extremity of destitution. A mistress of all domestic arts, she acted as cook and housemaid, she dressed the children and also cut out the children's clothes, stitching them with Frau Marx's help. She was simultaneously housekeeper and majordomo. The children loved her like a mother; and she, returning their love, wielded a mother's influence over them. Both Marx and his wife regarded her as a dear friend. Marx played chess with her, and frequently got the worst of the encounter. Helene's love for the Marx family was uncritical; everything they did was right, and could not be anything but good; anyone who criticised Marx had to reckon with her. All who were drawn into intimate relations with the family, she took under her motherly protection; she had, so to say, adopted the whole family. Having survived Marx and his wife, she has now transferred her attentive care to the Engels' household. She had made Engels' acquaintance in youth, and was as fond of him as of the Marx family.

Besides, Engels was, so to say, also a member of the Marx family. The girls spoke of him as their second father. He was Marx's *alter ego*. In Germany for many years their names were invariably coupled together, and history will always record their names together in its pages. In our modern age, Marx and Engels realised the ideal of friendship portrayed by the writers of classical antiquity. They had become acquainted in youth, had undergone a parallel development, had lived in the most intimate community of thoughts and feelings, had participated in the same revolutionary agitation, and had worked side by side as long as they could remain together. Presumably they would have done so throughout life, had not circumstances forced them apart for twenty years. After the defeat of the Revolution of 1848, Engels had to go to Manchester, while Marx was compelled to stay in London. None the less they continued to share their intellectual life by means of an exchange of letters. Almost daily they wrote to one another about political

and scientific happenings, and about the work on which they were engaged. As soon as Engels could free himself from his work in Manchester, he hastened to set up house in London, only ten minutes' walk from his beloved Marx. From 1870 till Marx's death in 1883, hardly a day passed on which they did not see one another, either at the one house or the other.

There were always great rejoicings in the Marx household when Engels announced his intention of coming over from Manchester. The coming visit was a topic of conversation for days in advance and on the day of his arrival, Marx was so impatient that he could not work. At length came the hour of re-union, and then the two friends would spend the whole night together, smoking and drinking, and talking of all that had happened since their last meeting.

Marx valued Engels' opinion more than that of anyone else. Engels was the man he deemed worthy to be his collaborator. In fact, Engels was for him a whole public. To convince Engels, to win Engels over to an idea, no labour seemed to Marx excessive. For instance. I have known him re-read entire volumes in search of facts required to change Engels' opinion concerning some minor detail (I cannot now recall what it was) in the political and religious war of the Albigenses. To win over Engels' opinion was a triumph for him.

Marx was proud of Engels. He recounted to me with pleasure all his friend's moral and intellectual merits; and he made a special journey to Manchester in order to show Engels to me. He admired the remarkable versatility of Engels' knowledge; and he was uneasy at the possibility of any accident that might befall him. "I am always terrified lest he should be thrown on one of his mad cross-country gallops," said Marx to me one day.

Marx was as good a friend as he was a loving husband and father. His wife, his daughters, Helene Demuth and Frederick Engels were beings worthy of the love of such a man as himself.

3

Marx, who had begun as one of the leaders of the radical bourgeoisie, found himself forsaken by his associates when his position became too sharply defined, and treated as an enemy as soon as he became a socialist. A hue and cry was raised against him, he was vilified and calumniated, and then he was driven out of Germany; thereafter a conspiracy of silence was organised against him and his works. His

Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte—which showed that of all the historians and publicists of the year 1848 Marx was the only one who understood the true nature of the causes and effects of the coup d'etat of December 2, 1851, and the only one who elucidated them—was completely ignored. Not a single bourgeois journal made any mention of the work, despite its actuality. *The Poverty of Philosophy* (an answer to Proudhon's *The Philosophy of Poverty*) and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* were likewise ignored. Only the foundation of the *International Working Men's Association* and the publication of the first volume of *Capital* broke this conspiracy of silence which had lasted some fifteen years. Marx could no longer be ignored; the International grew, and filled the world with the fame of its deeds. Although Marx kept himself in the background and let others appear as the chief actors, the identity of the manager was soon discovered. In Germany, the Social-Democratic Party was founded, and speedily became a power which Bismarck courted before he attacked it. Schweitzer, a follower of Lassalle, published a series of articles (Marx thought them worthy of note) which made *Capital* known to working class readers. The Congress of the International adopted a resolution moved by Johann Philipp Becker recommending the book to international socialists as the bible of the working class.

After the rising of March 18, 1871, in which there was a desire to trace the handiwork of the International, and after the defeat of the Commune (which the General Council of the International defended against the onslaughts of the bourgeois press of all lands), the name of Marx became world famous. He was now universally recognised as the invincible theoretician of scientific socialism, and as the organiser of the first international labour movement. *Capital* was now the textbook of socialists in every country; all socialist and labour journals popularised his theories; and during a great strike in New York extracts from his writings were published as leaflets in order to inspire the workers to hold firm and to prove to them the justice of their demands. *Capital* was translated from the German into the other most widely read European languages: into Russian, French and English. Extracts from the book appeared in German, Italian, French, Spanish and Dutch. Whenever, in Europe or America, opponents have tried to refute Marx's theories, socialist economists have been able to find an effective answer. Today, in very truth, *Capital* is what the above-mentioned congress of the International declared it to be, the bible of the working class.

But Marx's active participation in the international socialist movement left him too little time for his scientific

work ; and further fatal blows were struck at this work by the death of his wife and that of his eldest daughter, Madame Longuet.

Marx and his wife were intimately associated by ties of mutual dependence. Her beauty had been his joy and his pride ; her gentleness and her devotion had made it far easier for him to bear the poverty inseparable from his varied life as a revolutionary socialist. The suffering which brought Frau Marx to the grave was destined also to shorten the life of her husband. During her long and painful illness, Marx was worn out—mentally by distress, and physically by sleeplessness and by lack of fresh air and exercise. These were predisposing causes of the pulmonary inflammation which was to make an end of him.

On December 2, 1881, Frau Marx died as she had lived, a communist and materialist. Death had no terrors for her. When she felt that it was close at hand, she said : "Karl, my strength is broken." These were her last articulate words. On December 5, she was buried in unconsecrated ground in Highgate cemetery. In accordance with her lifelong sentiments and those of her husband, the funeral was kept as private as possible, and only a few intimate friends accompanied the body to its last resting-place. At the graveside Frederick Engels spoke as follows :

"My friends, the high-minded woman whom we are burying here was born at Salzwedel, in the year 1814. Soon afterwards her father, Baron von Westphalen, was transferred to Treves as Councillor of State, and there became an intimate friend of the Marx family. The children grew up together. The two highly-gifted natures found one another. When Marx entered the university, they had already made up their minds to join their lives.

"They were married in 1843, after the suppression of the first *Rheinische Zeitung*, which Marx had edited for a time. Ever since, Jenny Marx has not merely shared the fortunes, the labours and the struggle of her husband, but has taken part in them with the fullest understanding and the most glowing enthusiasm.

"The young couple went to Paris, for an exile which was at first voluntary, but only too soon became a real one. The Prussian government extended its persecution of Marx even there. With regret I have to add that no less a man than Alexander von Humboldt lent himself to being active in the execution of the expulsion order against Marx. The family was driven to Brussels. Then came the February Revolution. During the ensuing disturbances that also broke out in Brussels, the Belgian government was not content with

arresting Marx, but thought fit without any reason to throw his wife into prison as well.

"The revolutionary advance, begun in 1848, collapsed already in the following year. Further exile ensued, at first in Paris, and then, owing to a renewed intervention of the French government, in London. This time for Jenny Marx it was indeed exile with all its terrors. Nevertheless she bore up against the material difficulties, thanks to which she saw her two boys and her little girl sink into the grave. But it was a terrible blow to her that the government and the bourgeois opposition, from the vulgar-liberals to the democrats, made common cause in a great conspiracy against her husband; that they bespattered him with the most mean, detestable calumnies; that the whole press closed its columns against him, so that for a while he stood defenceless against the onslaught of foes whom he and his wife could not but despise. And this state of affairs lasted very long.

"But it did not last forever. The European proletariat once more secured conditions of existence in which a certain amount of independent mobility became possible. The International was founded. The class struggle of the workers spread from land to land, and Karl Marx, her husband, fought as the foremost of the foremost. Now began a period in which she received compensation for many of the grievous troubles of the past. She saw the calumnies which had been showered on Marx scattered like chaff before the wind; she saw his doctrines, which the reactionaries of all shades of opinion, from the feudalists to the democrats, had so much exerted themselves to suppress, being preached from the housetops in all the languages of the civilised world. She saw the proletarian movement, which to her was bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh, shaking the foundations of the old world from Russia to America, and pressing forward ever more certain of victory despite the most strenuous opposition. One of her last joys was to note the striking proof of inexhaustible energy recently given by our German workers in the last elections to the Reichstag.

"What such a woman, with so keen and critical an understanding, with so much political tact, so much energy and passion, with so much devotion for her comrades-in-arms in the labour movement—what such a woman has done during the last forty years has not been made public, has not been recorded in the annals of the contemporary press. It is known only to those who have lived through it all. But this much I am sure, that the wives of the refugees from the Commune will often think of her, and that many of us will sadly miss her bold and clever advice—bold but never boast-

ful, clever but never dishonourable.

"I need not speak of her personal qualities. Her friends know them, and will not forget them. If there was ever a woman whose supreme delight it was to make others happy, it was she."

After his wife's death, Marx's life was nothing more than a sequence of stoically endured physical and moral sufferings, which were intensified when a year later his eldest daughter, Madame Longuet, died suddenly. He was broken, and never recovered. The end came on March 14, 1883, in his sixty-seventh year, when he fell asleep, sitting at his work-table.

REMINISCENCES OF MARX

WILHELM LIEBKNECHT *

I. FIRST MEETING WITH MARX

THE friendship—with Marx's two eldest daughters, one six and the other seven years old—began a few days after I had arrived in London in the summer of 1850 from Switzerland, and, in fact, from one of the prisons of "Free Switzerland," having been sent through France with a deportation passport. I met the Marx family at the summer outing of the *Kommunistische Arbeiterbildungsverein* [Communist Workers' Educational Union] somewhere near London, I don't remember whether in Greenwich or in Hampton Court. "Pere Marx," whom I saw for the first time, immediately undertook a severe examination of me, looked me sharply in the eyes and examined my head fairly closely—an operation to which I was already accustomed from Gustav Struve who, because he obstinately persisted in doubting my "moral backbone," especially liked to make me the victim of his phrenological studies. However, the examination passed off successfully; I withstood the look of the lion's head with the coal-black lion's mane; the examination turned into lively cheerful conversation. Soon we were in the midst of unrestrained merry-making—Marx one of the most unrestrained of all—and I at once became acquainted with Frau Marx, with Lenchen, the faithful servant of the family from youth onwards, and with the children.

From that day I was at home in Marx's house and I never missed a day with the family, which at that time lived in Dean Street, one of the streets off Oxford Street, while I took up my quarters in nearby Church Street.

2. FIRST CONVERSATION

My first more lengthy conversation with Marx took place

* *Wilhelm Liebknecht* (1826-1900). One of the founders and leaders of German Social-Democracy. We reprint here excerpts from his reminiscences of Marx which were published in 1896. The titles of the excerpts here given have been added for the present edition.—*Ed.*

the day after our encounter at the above-mentioned country outing of the Communist Workers' Educational Union. Then there was naturally no opportunity for any detailed talk and Marx invited me to come the following day to the meeting place of the Union when Engels would probably also be present. I came a little before the appointed time, Marx was not yet there; but I found several old acquaintances and was in the midst of a lively conversation when Marx clapped his hand on my shoulder, greeting me in a very friendly way. Engels, he said, was in the private parlour, where we would be more alone. I did not know what a private parlour was, and it occurred to me that I was now about to face the "big" examination; however, I followed trustingly. Marx, who made the same sympathetic impression on me as the day before, had the property of inspiring confidence. He took me by the arm and led me into the private parlour, i.e., the private room of the landlord—or was it a landlady?—where Engels, who had already provided himself with a pewter pot full of dark brown stout, immediately received me with merry joking. In a moment we had ordered from Amy (or "Emma" as she had been rechristened in German by the refugees, on account of the similarity of sound), the nimble waitress, "stuff" to eat and drink—among us refugees the stomach question played an important role. In a moment the beer arrived and we sat down, I on one side of the table, Marx and Engels opposite me. With the massive mahogany table, the shining pewter mugs, the foaming stout, the appearance of the genuine English breakfast and trimmings, the long clay pipes which invited one to smoke them—it was all so comfortable that I was vividly reminded of a picture in the English illustrations to "Boz." But all the same it was an *examination!* But, why shouldn't it turn out all right? The conversation came more and more into swing. I had not had any personal contact with them before my meeting with Engels in Geneva the year before. Of Marx, I knew only the articles in the Paris *Jahrbucher* and *The Poverty of Philosophy*, and of Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. I, who had been a Communist since 1846, had only been able to procure *The Communist Manifesto* shortly before my meeting with Engels after the campaign on the Constitution, although I had naturally heard of it before and knew the contents; the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* [New Rhenish Gazette] I very rarely got a sight of; during the eleven months of its appearance I was either abroad or in prison or in the chaotic life of storm and stress of the volunteers.

I was suspected by my two examiners of petty-bourgeois "democracy" and "South German exuberance of feeling"

and many judgments which I pronounced on men and things met with very sharp criticism. On the whole, the examination passed off not unfavourably and the conversation gradually assumed a wider scope. Soon we were in the sphere of *natural science*, and Marx made fun of the victorious reaction which imagined that it had stifled the revolution and did not suspect that natural science was preparing a new revolution. King steam, who had revolutionised the world in the previous century, was coming to the end of his reign and another incomparably greater revolutionary would take his place, the *electric spark*. And then Marx related to me, full of fire and enthusiasm, that for the last few days there had been exhibited in Regent Street the model of an electrical machine which pulled a railway train. "Now the problem has been solved—the consequences are unpredictable. The economic revolution must be followed by a political one, for the latter is only the expression of the former." In the manner in which Marx discussed this progress of science and mechanics, his conception of the world, and especially what has been termed the *materialist conception of history*, was so clearly expressed that certain doubts which I had hitherto still maintained melted away like snow in the sunshine of spring. *That evening* I never came home at all—we spoke and joked and drank until late the next morning, and the sun was already high in the heavens when I went to bed. But for a long time, I could not sleep. My head was too full of everything that I had heard. At length, my thoughts, roving hither and thither, drove me out again and I hurried to Regent Street in order to see the model, this modern Trojan horse, which bourgeois society in suicidal fascination had introduced with rejoicing into their Ilion, as once the Trojan men and women had done with theirs, and which would bring about their certain destruction: the day will come when holy Ilion will be destroyed.

A dense crowd indicated the show window behind which the model was exhibited. I pressed my way through and, correctly enough, there was the locomotive and the train—and both of them were running merrily round.

It was then the beginning of July 1850.

3. MARX AS TEACHER AND EDUCATOR OF REVOLUTIONARIES

"Moor" (Marx) with his advantage of five or six years over us "young fellows" was conscious of the whole superiority of his ripened manhood, and he took every opportunity of testing us, and especially me. With his colossal reading and marvellous memory he could easily give us a difficult

time. How he rejoiced when he enticed a "young student" into difficult waters and proved to him *in corpore vili* [in his own person] the miserable character of our universities and of academic education.

But he educated also, in regular fashion. I can say of him in a double respect, in the wider and the narrower sense of the words, that *he was my teacher*. And one had to follow him in *every* sphere. I will say nothing of economics. In the Pope's palace one does not speak of the Pope. I will say something later about the lectures on economics in the Communist League. Marx was at home in both modern and ancient languages. I was a philologist and it gave him a childish pleasure when he could put before me some difficult passage from Aristotle or Aeschylus which I could not immediately understand. How he scolded me one day because I did not know—*Spanish!* In a moment he had pulled out Don Quixote from a heap of books and proceeded at once to give me a lesson. From Diez' comparative grammar of the Latin languages I already knew the basic features of the grammar and word construction and so I got on quite well under Moor's excellent guidance and his careful assistance when I faltered or came to a standstill. And how patient he was in teaching, he who otherwise was so stormily impatient! Only the entrance of a visitor put an end to the lesson. Every day I was examined and had to translate from Don Quixote or some other Spanish book—until my ability appeared sufficiently proven.

Marx was an excellent philologist, it is true more of the modern than of the ancient languages. He had the closest knowledge of Grimm's German grammar, and he was more familiar with the German dictionary of the brothers Grimm, in so far as it had appeared, than I, the philologist, was. He wrote English and French like an Englishman or Frenchman, though it is true he was not quite fluent in speaking. His articles for the *New York Tribune* are in classical English, his *Poverty of Philosophy*, written in reply to Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty*, is in classical French—the French friend whom he got to read through the manuscript for the press found very little to correct.

Since Marx knew the essence of language, and had busied himself with its origin, development and structure, he did not find it hard to learn languages. In London, he also learned Russian and during the Crimean War he had even the intention of learning Arabic and Turkish, but this was not carried out. Like anyone who really desires to master a language, he laid chief stress on reading. One who has a good memory—and Marx had a rare memory which never

let anything go—quickly acquires by much reading the vocabulary and phrases of a language. Practical use is then easily learned.

In the years 1850 and 1851, Marx gave a *Course of Lectures on Economics*. He only decided on it unwillingly; but after he had given a few private lessons to a small circle of friends, he allowed himself after all to be persuaded by us to give instruction to a larger circle. In this course, which was a great pleasure for all who had the good fortune to take part in it, Marx already unfolded completely the basic features of his system as it is to be found in *Capital*. In a crowded hall of the *Communist League*, or the Communist Workers' Educational Union, which was then situated in Great Windmill Street—in the same hall where two and a half years before *The Communist Manifesto* had been decided on—Marx demonstrated his remarkable talent for popularisation. Nobody hated vulgarisation more than he did, that is to say the falsification of science, making it shallow and uninspired. No one, however, possessed in a higher degree the capacity of expressing himself clearly. Clarity of speech is the fruit of clarity of thought; clear thinking necessarily determines a clear form of expression.

Marx proceeded methodically. He put forward a sentence, as short as possible, and then he explained it in a longer exposition, taking the greatest care to avoid using any expressions which would not be understood by the workers. Then he called upon the listeners to put questions to him. If he did not get any, he began to examine and did this with such pedagogical skill that not a single gap or misunderstanding escaped him. I learned, on expressing my admiration at his skill, that Marx had already delivered lectures on political economy in the Workers' Union at Brussels. In any case he had the makings of an excellent teacher. In teaching he also used a blackboard on which he wrote out the formulae—including those familiar to all of us from the early part of *Capital*.

It was a great pity that the course only lasted half a year, or even less. Elements came into the *Communist League* with whom Marx was not satisfied. After the waves of the flood of emigration had died away, the League shrank and took on a rather sectarian character—the old followers of Weitling and Cabet began to come to the fore again and Marx, for whom such a small sphere of activity was not sufficient and who had better things in view than to sweep away old cobwebs, kept away from the *Communist League*. . . .

He was a purist in speech almost to the point of pedantry. And my Upper Hessian dialect, which still obstinately stuck

to me—or I to it—brought innumerable sermons on my head.

If I relate such small things, I do so in order to show how Marx felt himself as a teacher in relation to us "young fellows."

This of course also expressed itself in another way. He demanded *much*. As soon as he had discovered a gap in our knowledge, he insisted strongly that it must be filled—for which purpose he suggested the necessary measures. If one was alone with him, one went through a regular examination. And his examinations were no joke. Marx was not to be deceived into taking an X for a Y. And if he noticed that it all bore no fruit, then friendship also came to an end. It was an honour for us to have him as a "schoolmaster." I was never with him without learning. . . .

At that time it was only a tiny minority in the working class that had raised itself to socialism; and among the Socialists themselves those who were Socialists in the scientific sense of Marx—in the sense of *The Communist Manifesto*—were only a minority. The mass of the workers, in so far as they had at all awakened to political life, remained stuck in the fog of sentimental democratic wishes and phrases such as characterised the movement of '48 and its prelude and aftermath. The applause of the crowd, popularity, was for Marx the proof that one was on the wrong path and his favourite quotation was the proud verse of Dante: "*Segui il tuo corso, e lascia dir le genti.*" [Follow your path and let people say what they will.]

How often he quoted this verse to us, which also comes at the conclusion of the Preface to *Capital*. No one is entirely insensitive to thrusts, blows, gnat bites and bug bites, and Marx as he followed his path, attacked from all sides, worried by cares for his daily bread, misunderstood, indeed often rudely rebuffed by the mass of the working people for whose struggle for emancipation he was forging the weapons in the stillness of the night, while they were running after glib-tongued windbags, dissembling traitors, even open enemies, Marx must often have encouraged himself in the loneliness of his poor, genuinely proletarian study room with the words of the great Florentine and drawn fresh energy from them.

He did not allow himself to be led astray. Unlike the prince of the *Thousand and One Nights*, who lost the victory and the reward of victory because he was enticed by the noise and the terrible pictures around him to look anxiously back, Marx strode forward, his eyes always looking ahead, fixed on the shining goal—he "let people say what they would" and even if "the earth had collapsed in ruins" he would not have been held back from his path. And the

victory has been awarded to him. Though not indeed the reward of victory.

Before all-conquering death mowed him down, he lived to see that the seed which he had sown had sprung up in glorious fashion and was ripening for the sickle of the reaper. Yes, his was the victory—and we have the reward of victory.

If he hated popularity, he had a holy anger against popularity-seeking. Smooth-tongued speakers were an abomination to him and woe to those who gave way to phrases. Then he was inexorable. “*Phraseur*” [phrasemonger] was in his mouth the most severe blame possible, and if he had once recognised someone to be a *phraseur* then he was finished with him. Logical thinking and clear expression of thoughts—that is what he instilled into us “young fellows” on every occasion and compelled us to study.

At about that time the magnificent Reading Room of the British Museum, with its inexhaustible book treasures, had been built, and to this, where he used to spend every day, Marx also drove us. Learn! Learn! That was the categorical imperative which he often enough cried loudly to us, and which was also evident from his example, indeed from the mere sight of this ever powerfully working intellect.

While other refugees made plans for the overthrow of the world and day by day and evening after evening intoxicated themselves with the hashish draught of thinking that “tomorrow it will begin,” we, the “incendiaries,” the “bandits,” the “scum of humanity” sat in the British Museum and endeavoured to educate ourselves and to prepare weapons and munitions for the future struggles.

Frequently one had had nothing to eat, but that did not prevent one from going into the Museum—there at any rate one had comfortable chairs to sit on and a pleasant warmth in winter—which was lacking at home, if one had anything like a “home” at all.

Marx was a stern teacher; he not only forced one to learn but he also convinced himself whether one had learned.

As a teacher, Marx had the rare quality of being stern without being discouraging.

And Marx had still another excellent qualification as a teacher; he compelled us to exercise *self-criticism* and did not tolerate that one should rest satisfied with what had been achieved. With the whip of his mockery he cruelly lashed the easy-going flesh of speculativeness.

4. MARX'S STYLE

Marx is said to have had no “style,” or a very bad one.

That is said by those who do not know what style is—smooth-tongued speakers and phrase-mongers who have not understood Marx and were not capable of understanding him, incapable of following the flights of his intellect to the highest peaks of science and passion and to the profoundest depths of human suffering and human depravity. If Buffon's phrase holds good of anyone, it holds good of Marx: "the style is the man"—Marx's style is Marx himself. A man who was so thoroughly truthful as he was, who knew no other cult than that of truth, who at a moment's notice would throw aside propositions, however laboriously arrived at and dearly cherished, as soon as he was convinced that they were incorrect, could not but show himself in his writings as he was. Incapable of hypocrisy, incapable of pretence or posing, he always was *himself* in his writings as in his life. It is true that with such a many-sided, wide-embracing and varied nature, the style cannot be so uniform, unvaried or even monotonous as in the case of less complex, narrower natures. The Marx of *Capital*, the Marx of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* and the Marx of *Herr Vogt* are three different persons, and yet in their diversity they are the same Marx—in their trinity still a unit—the unity of a great personality which expresses itself differently in different spheres and yet always remains the same. Certainly, the style of *Capital* is hard to understand—but is indeed the subject dealt with easily comprehensible? The style is not merely the man, it is also the matter, it must adapt itself to the matter. There is no royal road to science, each must laboriously struggle and climb even when he has the best teacher. To complain of the heavy, difficult, incomprehensible or even clumsy style of *Capital* is merely to acknowledge one's own laziness of thought or incapacity for thinking.

Is *The Eighteenth Brumaire* incomprehensible? Is the arrow incomprehensible which flies straight to its goal and buries itself in the flesh? Is the spear incomprehensible which, flung with a sure hand, strikes the enemy right in the heart? The words of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* are arrows, are spears—it is a style which brands and kills. If hatred, if contempt, if glowing love of freedom have ever been expressed in burning, destroying and elevating words, it is in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, which combines the indignation and severity of a Tacitus with the deadly satire of a Juvenal and the holy anger of a Dante. The style is here what it originally was in the hands of the Romans, a *stilus*, a sharp steel implement for writing and for stabbing. The style is a dagger employed for striking with certainty to the heart.

And in *Herr Vogt*—this sparkling humour—this joy, reminiscent of Shakespeare, at having discovered a Falstaff and in him an inexhaustible mine for furnishing an arsenal of mockery!

However, I will not speak further here of Marx's style. Marx's style is indeed Marx. He has been reproached with having attempted to compress the greatest possible content in the smallest possible space, but that is precisely Marx.

Marx attached extraordinary value to pure correct expression and in Goethe, Lessing, Shakespeare, Dante and Cervantes, whom he read every day, he had chosen the greatest masters. He showed the most painstaking conscientiousness in regard to purity and correctness of speech.

Marx was a severe purist—he often searched long and laboriously for the correct expression. He hated superfluous foreign words and if, nevertheless, he frequently used foreign words himself—where the subject did not require it—his long stay abroad, especially in England, must be borne in mind. But what an infinite wealth of original, genuine German word formations and word constructions we find in Marx who, in spite of the fact that two-thirds of his life were passed abroad, performed very high services for our German creators of the German language.

5. MARX AS POLITICIAN, TEACHER AND MAN

Politics for Marx was a *study*. Empty political talk and talkers he hated like poison. And in fact can one imagine anything more stupid? *History* is the product of all the forces acting in mankind and in nature, the product of human thought, of human passions, of human needs. Politics, however, is *theoretically*—the knowledge of these millions and billions of factors working at the “loom of time,” and *practically*—the action determined by this knowledge. Politics is therefore both a *theoretical and an applied science*.

How angry Marx could become when he spoke of the empty heads who settled matters with a few stereotyped phrases and who, taking their more or less confused desires and notions for facts, decide the fate of the world at the cafe table, in newspapers or popular meetings or parliaments. It is fortunate that the world does not take any notice of them. Among the “empty heads” were included very famous, much celebrated “great men.”

In this matter Marx did not only criticise, he has also given a model example; especially in his writings on the recent development of France and on the *coup d'état* of Napoleon, and in his letters to the *New York Tribune*, he has

provided classical examples of the political writing of history.

Here is a comparison which forces itself upon me. The coup d'etat of Bonaparte, which Marx dealt with in his *Eighteenth Brumaire* was also made the subject of a famous piece of writing by Victor Hugo, the greatest of the French romantics and artists in phraseology. What a contrast between these two works and these two men! On the one hand, the monstrous phrase and the monster of phrases, on the other hand the facts, methodically arranged—the cool deliberate man of science and politics, angry, but whose judgment is never disturbed by his anger.

On one hand, fleeting, shimmering foam, outbreaks of pathetic rhetoric, grotesque caricatures, on the other hand, every word a well-directed arrow, the naked truth convincing by its nakedness—no indignation but the establishment and branding of what is. Victor Hugo's *Napoleon le Petit* [*Napoleon the Little*] passed rapidly through ten editions and is today forgotten. And Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* will still be read with admiration thousands of years hence. Victor Hugo's *Napoleon le Petit* was a firework, Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* is a work of history which for the future historian of culture—and the future will know no other world history than the history of culture—will be as indispensable as Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War.

Marx could only become what he has become, in England—as I have already explained on another occasion. In such an economically undeveloped country as Germany was until the middle of this century, Marx could not have arrived at his critique of bourgeois economy and at knowledge of capitalist production any more than this economically undeveloped Germany could have had the political institutions of economically developed England. Marx was as much dependent on his environment and the conditions in which he lived as any other human being and without this environment and without these conditions he would not have become what he is. No one has proved that better than he has himself.

To observe such an intellect while conditions operate upon it and while it penetrates deeper and deeper into nature and society—that is already in itself a deep intellectual enjoyment and I can never congratulate myself highly enough on my good fortune which led me as an inexperienced young fellow, thirsting for knowledge, to Marx and brought me under his influence and schooling.

And in view of the many-sidedness, indeed one could say all-sidedness of this universal mind—that is a mind embracing the universe, penetrating into all essential particulars, despising nothing as unessential and insignificant—the

schooling was necessarily also a many-sided one.

Marx was one of the first who grasped the significance of Darwin's investigations. Already prior to 1859, the year of the publication of the *Origin of the Species*—by a remarkable coincidence also the year Marx's *Critique of Political Economy* appeared—Marx had recognised the epoch-making significance of Darwin who, far removed from the noise and bustle of the big city, was preparing on his peaceful country estate a revolution similar to the one Marx himself was preparing in the storm-swept centre of the world—only that the lever was applied at another point.

Particularly in the sphere of natural science—including physics and chemistry—and of history, Marx followed every new appearance, noted every progress: and Moleschott, Liebig, Huxley—whose “popular lectures” we conscientiously attended—were names as often occurring in our circle as Ricardo, Adam Smith, MacCulloch and the Scottish and Italian political economists. And when Darwin drew the conclusions of his investigations and made them public, for months we talked of nothing else but Darwin and the revolutionising power of his scientific achievements. I lay stress on this because “radical” enemies have spread the story that Marx out of jealousy only recognised the merits of Darwin very reluctantly and to a very limited extent.

Marx was the biggest-hearted and most just of men, where it was a question of appreciating the merits of others. He was too big for envy and jealousy, as for vanity. Only for false greatness, artificial renown in which incapacity and meanness spread themselves, had he a deadly hatred—as for everything false and falsified.

Marx was one of the few men among the big, little and mediocre personalities known to me who was not vain. He was too big for that, and too strong—and certainly also too proud. He never posed and was always himself. He was as incapable as any child of wearing a mask or disguising himself. Except where it was necessary on social or political grounds, he expressed his thoughts and feelings in full and without reservations and they were to be seen in his face. And if it was necessary to keep anything back, he exhibited what I might almost call a childish awkwardness which often amused his friends.

There never was a more truthful person than Marx—he was the very embodiment of truth. On looking at him, one knew at once where one stood. In our “civilised” society with its permanent state of war one cannot of course always tell the truth—that would be to deliver oneself into the hands

of the enemy or to become a social outlaw—but if one often cannot tell the truth one does not need for that reason to tell an untruth. I cannot always say in words what I am feeling and thinking, but that does not mean that I must or should say what I do *not* feel and think. The one is wisdom, the other is hypocrisy. And Marx was never hypocritical. He was simply incapable of it—exactly like an unspoiled child. Indeed, his wife often called him “my big child.” And no one has understood him and known him better than she—not even Engels. It is a fact that when he came into “society”—in quotation marks—where great attention was paid to externals and one had to exercise restraint, then our “Moor” was in fact a big child and he could become embarrassed and red like a little child.

Persons who acted were an abomination to him. I remember still how he laughingly related to us his first encounter with *Louis Blanc*. It was when he was still in Dean Street, in the little apartment which really consisted only of two rooms, of which the front room, the parlour, served as a room for visitors and for work, while the rear one served for everything else. *Louis Blanc* had announced himself to Lenchén, who led him into the front room while Marx hastily dressed himself in the other; the connecting door, however, was partly open and through the crack a farcical play was to be seen. The great historian and politician was a very little man, hardly taller than an eight year old boy, but nevertheless terribly vain. After a glance around in the proletarian drawing room, he discovered in one corner the extremely primitive mirror, before which he immediately took up his position. He threw himself into an attitude, drawing up his dwarf stature to the fullest possible extent—he wore shoes with the highest heels that I have ever seen—and, regarding himself self-complacently, began to posture like a March hare in love and to cultivate as imposing an attitude as possible. Frau Marx, who was also a witness of the comic scene, could with difficulty keep from laughing aloud. When his toilet was finished, Marx announced his entry with a powerful cough, so that the fop of the people's tribune could take a step back from the mirror and meet the incomer with a stylish bow. Certainly with Marx nothing was to be gained by posing and acting. And so the “little Louis”—as he was called by the Paris workers in contrast to Louis Bonaparte—was soon behaving as naturally as he was capable of doing.

6. MARX AT WORK

“Genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains” as

someone has said, and if this is perhaps not quite correct still it is certainly so at least to a very great extent.

There is no genius without extraordinary power of working and extraordinary performance of work. The so-called genius who knows nothing of either is only an iridescent soap bubble or a bill of exchange drawn on castles in the air. But where power of working and performance of work above the average is to be found, there is genius. I have met many who were considered by themselves and sometimes also by others to be geniuses who, however, had no power of working—they were only dilettantes with a gift of the gab and much talent for self-advertisement. All the really eminent men whom I have known were extremely diligent and worked very hard. This holds good of Marx to the fullest extent. He worked colossally, and since he was often prevented from working during the day—especially during his first period as a refugee—he had recourse to working at night. When we came home late in the evening from a session or meeting, he regularly sat down to work for a few hours. And the few hours lengthened themselves out more and more until at last he worked almost the whole night through and slept in the morning. His wife seriously remonstrated, but he declared laughingly that it was in accordance with his nature. I myself even at school had been accustomed to carry out the more difficult work late in the evening or during the night, when I felt most active intellectually, and therefore I did not regard the matter in the same light as Frau Marx. But she was right. And in spite of his unusually powerful constitution, Marx already at the end of the 'fifties began to complain of all sorts of disturbances to his bodily functions. The advice of a doctor had to be taken. The consequence was a categorical ban on *night work*; also much physical exercise, walks and rides were prescribed. At that time I used to walk about with Marx a good deal in the neighbourhood of London, especially on the hills to the north. He recovered very quickly, for in fact he had a bodily constitution excellently adapted to great exertions and performance of work. However, hardly did he feel himself well again before he gradually slipped once more into the habit of working at night until another crisis took place forcing him to a more reasonable mode of life—but always only so long as necessity made compulsory. The crises became more violent—a liver complaint developed, malignant tumours made their appearance. Gradually the iron constitution was undermined. I am convinced, and this was also the verdict of the doctors who treated him at the end, that if Marx could have made up his mind to lead a natural life, that is, one corresponding to the requirements

of his body, or, we may say, more in accordance with hygiene, he would still be living today. Only in his last years—when it was already too late—did he refrain from working at night. He worked so much the more during the day. He worked on every occasion when it was at all possible. Even when he went for a walk he had his notebook with him and made entries at every moment. And his work was never superficial. There is work and work. He always worked intensively, thoroughly. I have received from his daughter Eleanor a historical table which he had drawn up in order to get a survey for some subsidiary note. Certainly for Marx there was nothing that was subsidiary and this table for his own immediate practical use is drawn up with as much diligence and care as if it were intended for publication.

Marx worked with an endurance which often filled me with astonishment. He did not know what fatigue was. He had to collapse and even then he did not relax.

If the value of a man is to be reckoned according to the work performed by him—as the value of things is by the quantity of labour embodied in them—then, even from this standpoint, Marx is of so high a value that only a few among the giants of intellect could be put alongside of him.

And what has bourgeois society given as remuneration for this enormous total of work? On *Capital* he worked for forty years—and how he worked! He worked as only a Marx could work. And I do not exaggerate when I say that the worst-paid wage earner in Germany has received more in wages during forty years than Marx received as “honorarium”—literally, a payment of honour—for one of the two greatest scientific creations of this century, the other being the works of Darwin.

“Science” has not a market value. And could one expect bourgeois society to pay a respectable price for the elaboration of its own death sentence?

7. MARX AND CHILDREN

Marx, like all persons of a strong and healthy nature, was extraordinarily fond of children. He was not merely the most tender father, who could be a child with his children for hours together—he also felt himself, as it were, magnetically drawn to strange children who came in his path, especially those who were poor and helpless. Hundreds of times, when wandering through poverty-stricken districts, he would suddenly tear himself away from us in order to stroke the hair and press a penny or halfpenny in the little hand of some child sitting in rags at a doorway. He had become suspicious

of beggars, for in London begging has become a regular trade—and indeed one with a golden foundation although its income is only in copper. Accordingly he did not allow himself to be humbugged for long by beggars, men or women, to whom in the beginning he never refused a gift—as long as he had anything. He had even a furious anger against some of them who had levied toll on him by artistic exhibition of artificial disease and poverty, because he regarded the exploitation of human sympathy as an especially gross meanness and a theft from poverty. But if a beggar approached Marx with a whispering child, then he was irretrievably lost, were rascality depicted never so plainly on the beggar's countenance. He could not resist the beseeching eyes of the child.

Bodily weakness and helplessness always aroused his lively sympathy. A man who beat his wife—and wifebeating was then very much the fashion in London—he would gladly have had flogged to the point of death. Owing to his impulsive nature on such occasions he not infrequently involved both himself and us into trouble. One evening I was riding with him on the top of an omnibus towards Hampstead Road when in front of a gin palace at a halting place we noticed a crowd out of which came a piercing woman's voice shrieking, murder! murder! Quick as lightning, Marx sprang down and I after him. I wanted to hold him back—I might as well have tried to hold back a bullet from a gun with my bare hand. In a moment we were in the midst of the throng; and the wave of human beings closed behind us. "What is the matter?" What was the matter was only too soon visible. A drunken woman had had a quarrel with her husband, the latter wanted to get her home, she resisted and raised an outcry like one possessed. So far, so good. There was no reason for our intervention—that we saw. But that the quarrelling pair also saw, and they immediately made peace and then turned on us, while the crowd around us drew closer and closer and took up a threatening attitude against the "damned foreigners." The woman especially made a furious onslaught on Marx and aimed her attack at his magnificent, shining black beard. I tried to calm the storm—in vain. And if two powerful constables had not opportunely appeared on the battlefield, we would have had to pay dearly for our philanthropic attempts at intervention. We were glad to come out of it with a whole skin and to be seated once more on an omnibus going towards home. Afterwards Marx was somewhat more cautious in such attempts at intervention.

One had to have seen Marx with his children in order to get a full idea of the depth of feeling and childishness of this hero of science. In his minutes of leisure or on walks,

he carried them about, played the maddest, merriest games with them—in brief, was a child among children. On Hampstead Heath we often played “cavalry”: I took one of the little daughters on my shoulders, Marx the other, and then we vied with one another in trotting and jumping—on occasion there was also a little fight between the mounted riders. For the girls were as unrestrained as boys and could also endure a bump without crying.

The society of children was a necessity for Marx—he re-created and refreshed himself by this means. And when his own children were grown up or dead, then the grandchildren took their place. Little Jenny, who in the beginning of the 'seventies married Longuet, one of the Commune refugees, brought Marx several children into the house—wild youngsters. The eldest especially, Jean or Johnny, now on the point of “serving” his year as an involuntary “volunteer” in France, was the grandfather's favourite. He could do what he liked with him and he knew it. One day, when I was on a visit in London, Johnny, whom the parents had sent over from Paris—as occurred several times every year—hit upon the brilliant idea of converting Moor into an *omnibus*, on the box of which, that is to say Marx's shoulders, he set himself, while Engels and I were appointed to be *omnibus* horses. And when we were properly harnessed, then there was a wild chase—I should have liked to say furious drive—in the little house garden behind Marx's cottage in Maitland Park Road. Perhaps it may have been in Engels' house at Regent's Park. The average London houses are all so much alike that they can be easily confused, and especially the house gardens. A few square metres of gravel and grass, both so closely covered with a layer of London “blacks” or “black snow” the soot particles flying around, that one cannot distinguish where *grass* and *gravel* begin and end—that is the London “garden.”

And now they started off, gee up! With international cries in German, English and French—Go on! *Plus vite!* Hurrah! Moor had to trot so that the sweat ran down his face, and if Engels or I tried to slacken the pace at all, the whip of the unrelenting driver immediately descended on our backs: you naughty horse! *en avant!* And so on, until Marx could not go on any more—and then negotiations began with Johnny and an armistice was concluded.

8. LENCHEN

Ever since the time when Marx's household was established, Lenchen, in the words of one of the daughters, became

the soul of the house and, in the highest, noblest sense of the words—the maid of all work. Was there anything which she did not have to do? Was there anything which she did not do joyfully? I will only recall the many journeys to the mysterious, much-berated and yet cultivated, benevolent relative, the “uncle” with the three gilt balls. And always she was cheerful, laughing, ready to help. But no! She could also be angry and “Moor’s” enemies hated her with a fierce hatred.

If Frau Marx was not well, Lenchen acted as mother—and on other occasions, also, she was a second mother to the children. And she had a will of her own—a strong, firm will. What she thought necessary had to happen.

Lenchen exercised, as we have said, a sort of dictatorship—to formulate the relationship precisely, I might say: Lenchen was the dictator in the house, Frau Marx the ruler. And Marx submitted like a lamb to this dictatorship. It has been said that no one is a great man in the eyes of his valet. Marx was certainly not one in Lenchen’s eyes. She would have sacrificed herself for him, she would have given up her life for him and Frau Marx and each of the children a hundred times over if it had been necessary or possible—she did indeed give her life—but Marx could not impress her. She knew him with all his moods and weaknesses and she twisted him round her little finger. However irritable his mood, however much he stormed and raged so that everyone else was glad to keep clear of him, Lenchen went into the lion’s den, and if he growled she so forcibly read Leviticus to him that the lion became as tame as a lamb.

9. WALKS WITH MARX

Our journeys to Hampstead Heath! Were I to live to be a thousand years old, I would never forget them. Hampstead “Heath” lies beyond Primrose Hill and like it is well known to the world outside London through Dickens’ *Pickwick*. It is today still very largely heath, that to say, hilly country, not built upon, with prickly gorse bushes and groups of trees growing on it. It has miniature mountains and valleys where everyone can roam and sport at will without fear of trespassing, i.e., penetrating without authorisation into private property, where one may be stopped by a guardian of the holy property and subjected to fine. Hampstead Heath is still today a favourite place for the Londoner’s excursions, and on a fine Sunday it is black with men’s and gay with women’s clothes. The ladies have a special predilection for putting the patience of the, in any case very patient, don-

keys and hack horses to the test. Forty years ago, Hampstead Heath was very much larger and more primitive than it is today. A Sunday on Hampstead Heath was one of our greatest joys. The children talked of it the whole week beforehand and to us grown-ups, old and young, it was also a source of the greatest joy. The very journey thither was a festival. The girls were excellent walkers, lissom and untiring as cats. From Dean Street, where the Marxes lived—a few doors away from Church Street where I had my anchorage—it was a good hour and a quarter, and as a rule we started out by eleven o'clock in the morning. Frequently, it is true, we started later, for early rising is not the custom in London and it always took some time before everything was ready, the children looked after and the basket properly packed.

The basket! It stands, or rather hangs, before my "mental eye" as really, as vividly, as alluringly, as appetisingly as if I had seen it on Lenchen's arm only yesterday.

For the basket was our provision store, and when one has a strong and healthy stomach and very often not the necessary small change in one's pocket (large sums at that time were entirely out of the question), then the food question plays a very outstanding role. And the good Lenchen, who kept a sympathetic heart in her breast for us starving and therefore ever-hungry guests knew this very well. A mighty roast of veal was the traditional *piece de resistance* for a Sunday on Hampstead Heath. A basket of unusual dimensions for London, rescued by Lenchen from the old days at Treves, served as a receptacle, as a sort of tabernacle, for the holy of holies. Along with the roast was tea with sugar, and occasionally some fruit. Bread and cheese we would buy on the Heath, where, as in Berlin coffee gardens, crockery and hot water with milk could be obtained and everyone, according to desire and means, could—and can—buy bread, cheese, butter, beer, together with the shrimps, watercress and winkles characteristic of the place.

The march itself was usually accomplished in the following order. I went in front as vanguard accompanied by the two girls—sometimes relating stories, and sometimes doing free gymnastic exercises or hunting for wild flowers, which at that time were not so rare as they now are. Behind us came some friends. Then came the main body of the army: Marx with his wife and perhaps some Sunday visitors who claimed a certain amount of attention. And behind these came Lenchen with the hungriest of the guests, who helped her to carry the basket. If there was more company present it divided itself between the various columns of the army. I need hardly say that the order of march or battle array

could be varied according to mood or needs.

Arrived on the Heath, we would first of all look out for a spot where we could set up our tent, taking into account the possibilities of obtaining tea and beer.

Autar epeis posios kai edetios ex eron hento—

But after they had refreshed themselves with food and drink—then the excursionists sought out the most comfortable place for sitting and camping, and—provided a nap was not given the preference—the Sunday newspapers bought on the way were brought out from the pockets and we would begin to read and talk politics—while the children, who quickly found playmates, played hide-and-seek among the gorse bushes.

But we had to introduce some variety into our life of ease and so races were held, and sometimes there was wrestling, aiming with stones or other sports. One Sunday we discovered in the neighbourhood a horse-chestnut tree with ripe fruits. "Let's see who can bring down the most," someone cried, and with shouts of "hurrah" we set to work. Moor was like a madman, and certainly bringing down chestnuts was not his strong point. But he was indefatigable—as we all were. The bombardment only ceased when the last chestnut had been secured amid wild cries of triumph. Marx could not use his right arm for eight days afterwards, and I was no better off.

The greatest "treat" of all was a ride on the donkeys. What uproarious laughter and merry-making there was! And what comical scenes! How Marx amused himself—and us! He amused us in two ways: both by his more than primitive equestrian skill and also by the fanaticism with which he asserted his virtuosity in this art. His virtuosity consisted in the fact that as a student he had once taken riding lessons—Engels asserted that he had never taken more than three—and that in the festival years when he visited Manchester he went out riding with Engels on a venerable Rosinante that was probably a great-grandchild of the gentle lamb-like mare which old Fritz had once presented to the worthy Gellert.

Our return home from Hampstead Heath was always very jolly, although the pleasure in retrospect did not evoke such joyful thoughts as in anticipation. We were saved from melancholy—although we certainly had only too good grounds for it—by our sardonic humour. The woes of the refugee did not exist for us—if anyone began to complain he was reminded in most emphatic fashion of his social duties.

The order of march on the way back was different from that on the way out. The children had made themselves tired by running about, and formed the rearguard together

with Lenchen who, being lighter of foot and load since the basket was emptied, was now able to take charge of them. Usually we struck up a song, only rarely political songs, mainly folk songs, especially sentimental songs and—this is no fable—"patriotic" songs from the "Fatherland," such as "*O Strassburg, O Strassburg, du wunderschone Stadt*," which was a great favourite. Or the children would sing Negro songs to us, and even dance as well—if their legs had recovered somewhat from fatigue. During the march, it was as impermissible to speak of politics as of refugee sorrows. On the other hand, we spoke much of literature and art, and then Marx had an opportunity of showing his tremendous memory. He would recite long passages from the *Divine Comedy* of which he knew almost the whole by heart, and scenes from Shakespeare, in which case his wife, who had an excellent knowledge of Shakespeare, would often relieve him . . .

From the end of the 'fifties we lived in the north of London, in Kentish Town and Haverstock Hill, and then our favourite walks were on the hills and fields between and behind Hampstead and Highgate. Here we could look for flowers and identify plants, which gives especial pleasure to town children in whom the cold, seething ocean of stones of the great city produces a passionate hunger for the green scenery of nature. What a joy it was for us when in the course of our wanderings we discovered a little pond overshadowed by trees and I was able to point out to the children the first living "wild" forget-me-not. And our joy was still greater when we came on a luxuriant, dark velvet green meadow, on to which we ventured after carefully reconnoitring the ground in defiance of warnings against "trespass," and discovered some wild hyacinths among other spring flowers in a wind-protected spot. . . .

10. ILLNESS AND DEATH*

On Moor's stay in Mustapha (Algiers) I cannot say much more than that the weather was awful, that Moor found there a very clever and friendly doctor and that every one in the hotel was attentive and friendly towards him.

During the autumn and winter of 1881-82, Moor was at first with Jenny in Argenteuil near Paris. There we met and remained together for a few weeks. Then he travelled to the south of France and to Algiers, but came back very ill.

* A letter from Tussy (Marx's youngest daughter—Eleanor).—*Hd.*

He passed the autumn and winter of 1882-83 in Ventnor (on the Isle of Wight) from where he returned in January 1883 after Jenny's death—January 8.

Now about Karlsbad. We visited it for the first time in 1874. Moor had been sent there on account of a liver complaint and sleeplessness. In the following year, 1875, his first stay having done him a great deal of good, he went there alone. The next year, i.e., 1876, I accompanied him again because he said that he had missed me very much the year before. In Karlsbad he took his cure with great conscientiousness and carried out exactly what was prescribed for him. We made many friends there. As a travelling companion, Moor was delightful. Always in good spirits, he was always ready to enjoy everything whether it was beautiful scenery or a glass of beer. And with his extensive knowledge of history he could make every place that we came to even more vivid and living in the past than it actually was in the present.

I believe that various things have been written about Moor's stay in Karlsbad. Among other things I heard of a longish article, I cannot remember now in which paper it appeared; perhaps M.O. in D. could tell you something more about it. He spoke to me about a very good article.

In 1874-75 we saw each other in Leipzig. Then on our way home we made an excursion to Bingen, which Moor wanted to show me because he had been there on his honeymoon with my mother. Besides that we also went to Dresden, Berlin, Prague, Hamburg and Nuremberg during these two journeys.

In 1877, Moor should have gone back to Karlsbad. However, it was reported to us that the German and Austrian governments intended to expel him, and since the journey was too long and expensive to let it come to an expulsion, he did not go to Karlsbad any more—to his disadvantage for he always felt after the cure as if he had been rejuvenated.

We went to Berlin chiefly in order to visit the faithful friend of my father, my dear uncle Edgar von Westphalen. We remained only a few days. To Moor's joy we heard later that the police had paid him a visit at our hotel on the third day—exactly an hour after we had left.

In the autumn of 1880—when our dear mother was already so ill that she could only rarely rise from her sickbed—Moor had a serious attack of pleurisy. It became so dangerous because he had been always neglecting his illness. The doctor (our excellent friend Donkin) regarded the case as almost hopeless. It was a terrible time. In the large front room lay our mother, in the little room behind was Moor. And the two of them, who were so used to one another, so close to

one another, could not be together in the same room.

Our good old Lenchen (you know what she was to us) and I had to look after both of them. The doctor said that our care saved Moor's life. Be that as it may. I only know that neither Helene (Lenchen) nor I ever went to bed for three weeks. We were up and about day and night, and if we were at any time absolutely exhausted, we took turns in resting for an hour. Moor once more got the better of his illness. I shall never forget the morning when he felt himself strong enough to go into mother's room. They were young again together—she a loving maid and he a loving youth, who were entering life together—and not an old man devastated by illness and a dying old woman who were taking leave from one another for life.

Moor became better and if he was still not strong, still he appeared to be strong.

Then mother died—on December 2, 1881; her last words—remarkably enough in English—were addressed to her “Karl.” When our dear General (Engels) came, he said—what at the time almost moved me to anger—“*Moor is also dead.*”

And it was actually so.

With mother's life went that of Moor also. He struggled hard in order to keep going, for he was a fighter to the last—but he was a broken man. His general state of health became worse and worse. If he had been more selfish, he would have let things take their course. However for him there was something which stood above everything else—that was his devotion to the cause. He attempted to complete his great work and therefore he agreed to undertake another voyage of recovery.

In the spring of 1882 he went to Paris and Argenteuil,* where I met him, and we passed some really happy days together with Jenny and her children. Moor then travelled to the south of France and finally to Algiers.

During his whole stay in Algiers, Nice and Cannes he was dogged by bad weather. He wrote me long letters from Algiers. Many of them I have lost, because on his request I sent them also to Jenny—and she gave me very few of them back.

When Moor finally came home again, he was very ill; and now we began to fear the worst. On the advice of the doctor, he spent the autumn and winter at Ventnor in the Isle of Wight. I must mention here that at that time, on

* This is the journey spoken of at the beginning of this letter. [Note by W. Liebknecht]

Moor's wish, I spent three months in Italy with Jenny's youngest son, Jean (Johnny). In the spring of 1883 I went to Moor and took Johnny with me, who was his special favourite among his grandchildren. I had to go back because I had to give my lessons.

And now came the last dreadful blow: the news of Jenny's death. Jenny, the first born, Moor's favourite daughter, died suddenly (on January 8). We had received letters from "Moor"—I have them now before me—in which he writes that Jenny's health was better and we (Helene and I) did not need to be anxious. We received the telegram announcing her death an hour later than the letter in which Moor wrote the above. I travelled immediately to Ventnor.

I have gone through many sad hours in my life, but none was so sad as that. I felt that I was bringing my father his death sentence. On the long anxious journey, I tortured my brain thinking how to impart the news to him. I did not need to impart it, my face betrayed me—Moor said at once, "Our Jenny is dead!" and then he requested me to go to Paris at once and help with the children. I wanted to remain with him—he would not suffer any contradiction. I had hardly been half an hour in Ventnor when I was already on my sad troubled way to London in order to set out immediately for Paris. I did what Moor wished on account of the children.

I will not speak of my journey there—I can only recall that time with a shudder—that mental agony, that torture—but no more of that. Sufficient—I came back and Moor returned home—to die.

And now a word about our mother. She lay dying during a whole month and suffered all the terrible tortures which cancer brings with it. Yet her good spirits, her inexhaustible wit, which you know very well, never deserted her for an instant. She inquired as impatiently as a child for the results of the elections then being held in Germany (1881), and how she rejoiced at our victories. Up to her death, she remained cheerful and tried by joking to relieve our anxiety about her. Yes, in spite of her frightful suffering, she joked—she *laughed*—she laughed at the doctor and all of us because we were so serious. She remained fully conscious until almost the last moment, and when she could not speak any more—her last words were addressed to "Karl"—she pressed our hands—and tried to smile.

As far as Moor is concerned, you know that he went from his bedroom into the study in Maitland Park, sat in the armchair and tranquilly went to sleep.

This armchair the "General" kept until his death and I

have it now.

If you write about Moor, don't forget Lenchen. I know you will not forget mother—Helene was to a certain extent the axis around which everything in the house turned. The best, truest friend. Therefore be sure not to forget Helene, if you write about Moor.

Now, since you wish it, a little more about Moor's stay in the south. We—he and I—spent a few weeks at the beginning of 1882 with Jenny in Argenteuil. In March and April, Moor was in Algiers, in May in Monte Carlo, Nice, Cannes. Towards the end of June and during the whole of July he was again with Jenny, and Lenchen was also in Argenteuil at the time. From Argenteuil Moor went with Laura to Switzerland, Vevey, etc. Towards the end of September or at the beginning of October, he returned to England and immediately went to Ventnor where Johnny and I visited him.

And now to your question about our good Helene or Edgar (Musch) was born in 1847—but I am not quite sure—and he died at the end of 1855. "Little Fawkes"*(Foxchen) Heinrich was born on November 5, 1849, and he died when about two years old. My little sister Francisca, born in 1851, died while still a baby, about eleven months old.

And now to your question about our good Helene or "Nymy" as we called her in the end, because Johnny Longuet called her that, I don't know why, when he was still a baby. Lenchen came to my grandmother from Westphalia as a little child of about eight or nine years old, and she grew up with Moor, mother and Edgar von Westphalen. Helene always remained very tenderly attached to the old Westphalen. And Moor also. He never tired of telling us of the old Baron von Westphalen, of his wonderful knowledge of Shakespeare and Homer. He could repeat word for word from beginning to end whole rhapsodies of Homer and he knew most of Shakespeare's plays by heart both in English and German. Moor's father, on the other hand—Moor had a great admiration for his father—was a real "Frenchman" of the eighteenth century. He knew his Voltaire and Rousseau by heart, as the old Westphalen knew his Homer and Shakespeare. And Moor undoubtedly owed his remarkable many-sidedness to a large extent to these "hereditary" influences.

But to return to Helene. Whether she came to my parents before or after they went to Paris—(which occurred very soon

* He got the name Fawkes from the hero of the "Gunpowder Plot," Guido (Guy) Fawkes, whose anniversary November 5 every year is still noisily celebrated or more correctly execrated. [Note by W. Liebknecht.]

after their marriage) I cannot say. I only know that my grandmother sent the young girl to our mother "as the best that she could send her—faithful, dear Lenchen." And faithful, dear Lenchen remained with my parents, and her younger sister Marianne also came later on. You will hardly recall her because it was after your time.

11. WANT AND PRIVATION

Innumerable lies have been spread about Marx—including that he lived in riotous luxury while the common herd of refugees around him went hungry and starved. I do not consider myself justified in entering here into details, but I can say this: what these diaries have once again brought freshly and vividly before my eyes was no isolated case of need such as could happen to anyone, especially in a foreign country where sources of assistance are lacking; Marx and his family experienced for years the misery of the life of a refugee. There can have been few refugees who suffered more than Marx and his family. And in the later period also, when the income was larger and more regular, the Marx family was not spared cares over daily food. During whole years—and the worst was then already over—the pound sterling which Marx was paid each week for his articles to the *New York Tribune* was the only certain source of income.

12. MARX'S GRAVE

Marx's *family grave*, it should more correctly be called. It is situated in the *Highgate cemetery* in the north of London on a hill which overlooks the giant city.

Marx did not want a "memorial." To have desired to put up any other memorial to the creator of *The Communist Manifesto* and of *Capital* than that which he had built himself, would have been an insult to the great dead. In the heads and hearts of millions of workers, who have "united" at his call, he has not merely a memorial more lasting than bronze, but also the living soil in which what he taught and desired will become—and in part has already become—an act.

We Social-Democrats have no saints and no saints' burial places but millions think with thankfulness and veneration of the man who rests in this cemetery in the north of London. And a thousand years hence, in a period when the savagery and narrow-mindedness which the efforts for the emancipation of the working class today encounter have become a scarcely credible tale of the past, free and noble men will still stand at this graveside and with bared heads whisper to their children:

"HERE LIES KARL MARX!"

Here lies Karl Marx and his family. A simple marble slab, bordered with ivy, lies like a pillow at the head of the grave which is enclosed by marble blocks, and on the slab is the inscription :

JENNY VON WESTPHALEN
The beloved wife of

KARL MARX
Born 12 February 1814
Died 2 December 1881

AND KARL MARX
Born May 5, 1818, died March 14, 1883

And HARRY LONGUET
Their grandson
Born July 4, 1878, died March 20, 1883

AND HELENE DEMUTH
Born January 1, 1823, died November 4, 1890

The family grave does not contain the whole family ; that is in respect to the members no longer alive. The three children who died in London are buried in other London cemeteries—one of them, Edgar ("Musch"), for certain, the other two probably in the cemetery of Whitfield Chapel in Tottenham Court Road. And Jenny Marx, the favourite daughter, rests in Argenteuil near Paris, where death snatched her from her flourishing family.

But if not all of the dead children and grandchildren have found a place in the family grave, still there is one who belonged to the family, although not by blood relationship : "the faithful Lenchen," Helene Demuth.

That she should rest in the family grave had been decided already by Frau Marx and after her by Marx. And Engels, the faithful Eckhart, like faithful Lenchen, carried out this duty together with the surviving children as he would have carried it out also on his own initiative.

What Marx's children thought of Lenchen, how tenderly they were attached to her, how deeply they revered her memory, can be seen from the letter of Marx's youngest daughter published in another place.*

And when on my way home via Paris, after my last visit to London, I was revelling in old London reminiscences with

* See above, section 10, p. 40.—*Hd.*

"Lorchen" in *Draveil*, where Lafargue and his wife *Laura Marx* had fashioned themselves an enviable country home, and I spoke of my intention of writing this memorial booklet, she also said to me, just as Tussy had done in the letter reproduced above and afterwards also by word of mouth: "Don't forget about Lenchen!"

Now—I have not forgotten Lenchen and shall not forget her. Was she not indeed a friend to me for forty years? Was she not indeed in the London refugee period often also my "providence"? How often she helped me out with six-pence when my pockets were empty and there was not too low a tide in Marx's house—for if the tide was low there, then there was nothing to be got from Lenchen. And how often, when my ability as a tailor did not suffice, did she artistically repair some indispensable article of clothing, which was—on financial grounds—not replaceable in any period of time that could be foreseen, so as to make it wearable again for some weeks.

When I saw Lenchen for the first time, she was twenty-seven years old and, while no beauty, she was pretty, well-grown and had very attractive features. She had no lack of admirers and she had repeated opportunities of making a good match. Nevertheless without having made any vow, it was a matter of course for her faithful heart that she had to remain with "Moor" and Frau Marx and the children.

She remained—and the years of her youth passed away. She remained during want and privation, in good fortune and misfortune. Her first rest came when death had mowed down both the woman and the man to whom she had linked her fate. She found rest with Engels and with him she died—forgetful of self to the last. And now she rests in the family grave.

Friend Motteler, the "Red postmaster," who lives now in Hampstead not far from Highgate, gives the following account of the grave:

"Marx's grave is set round with white marble; the small slab with names and dates in black type is of the same material. Spanish grass, wood ivy, which I brought back from Switzerland on one occasion, and a few small rose bushes form the simple adornment, mostly overgrown by wild grasses, as is usual here in bordered graves. My way usually takes me twice a week through Highgate Cemetery by Marx's grave; then I remove the grass if the overgrowth is excessive. A good deal gets withered during hot summers, as the two

last have been (this year when it rained so much on the Continent, there was a drought in England the like of which no one remembers, and even in the parks the grass is completely withered). Even with Lessner's help, it was not possible for me to protect the grave from the effects of the burning sun and so we had after all, of course in agreement with the Avelings, who on account of the enormous distance can only seldom come here, to entrust it to the regular care of the cemetery gardener."

FOUR LETTERS OF ENGELS

I

Engels to Johann Phillip Becker

London, March 15, 1883.

My dear old fellow,

Be thankful that you saw Marx last autumn, for you will never see him again. Yesterday afternoon at 2-45, after leaving him alone for less than two minutes, we found him peacefully asleep in his armchair. The greatest mind in our Party had ceased to think, the strongest heart that I have ever known had ceased to beat. It was in all probability a case of internal hemorrhage.

You and I are now almost the last of the old guard of 1848. Well, we'll remain in the breach. The bullets are whistling, our friends are falling, round us, but this is not the first time we two have seen this, and if a bullet hits one of us, let it come—I only ask that it should strike fair and square and not leave us long in agony.

Your old comrade-in-arms,

F. Engels

II

Engels to Wilhelm Liebknecht

London, March 14, 1883.

Dear Liebknecht,

Although I saw him this evening laid out on his bed, the rigidity of death in his face, I cannot fully realize that that brilliant mind has ceased to impregnate the proletarian movement of both worlds with its mighty thoughts. We all owe what we are to him; and the movement as it is today is the creation of his theoretical and practical work. If it had not been for him we should all still be groping in a maze of confusion.

Yours,
F. Engels

III

Engels to Eduard Bernstein

London, March 14, 1883.

Dear Bernstein,

You will have got my telegram by now. It all happened terribly suddenly. When our hopes were at their highest, his strength suddenly failed him and this afternoon he simply passed away in sleep. In two minutes his brilliant mind had ceased to think, and just when the doctors had encouraged us with every hope for his recovery. What the worth of this man was, both in theory and in practice too when great decisions had to be made, only one who has long been associated with him can realize. His mighty vision will be buried with him for years to come. It was something of which we others are not capable. The movement will go on, but it will lack that calm timely guidance of a superior mind which has saved it from so many tedious errors in the past.

More later on. It is now midnight, and I have been writing letters and running about doing all sorts of things all the afternoon and evening.

Yours,
F. Engels

IV

Engels to Friedrich Anton Sorge

London, March 15, 1883.

Dear Sorge,

Every morning for the last six weeks I had a terrible feeling of dread that I might find the blinds down when I turned the corner of the street. Yesterday afternoon at 2-30—which is the best time for visiting him—I arrived to find the house in tears. It seemed that the end was near. I asked what had happened, tried to get to the bottom of the matter, to offer comfort. There had been only a slight hemorrhage, but suddenly he had begun to sink rapidly. Our good old Lenchen, who had looked after him better than a mother cares for her child, went upstairs to him and then came down. He was half asleep, she said, I might come in. When we entered the room he lay there asleep, but never to wake again. His pulse and breathing had stopped. In those two minutes he had passed away, peacefully and without pain.

All events which take place by natural necessity bring their own consolation with them, however dreadful they may be. So in this case. Medical skill might have been able to give him a few more years of vegetative existence, the life of a helpless being, dying—to the triumph of the doctors' art—not suddenly, but inch by inch. But our Marx could never have borne that. To have lived on with all his uncompleted works before him, tantalized by the desire to finish them and yet unable to do so would have been a thousand times more bitter than the gentle death which overtook him. 'Death is not a misfortune for him who dies, but for him who survives' he used to say, quoting Epicurus. To see that mighty genius lingering on as a physical wreck to the greater glory of medicine and to the scorn of the Philistines whom in the prime of his strength he had so often put to rout—not, it is better, a thousand times better, as it is—a thousand times better that we shall in two days' time carry him to the grave where his wife lies at rest.

After all that had gone before, about which the doctors do not know as much as I do, there was in my opinion no other alternative.

Be that as it may, mankind is shorter by a head, and the greatest head of our time at that. The proletarian movement goes forward, but gone is its central figure to which Frenchmen, Russians, Americans and Germans spontaneously turned at critical moments to receive always that clear incontestable counsel which only genius and a perfect understanding of the situation could give. Local lights and lesser minds, if not actual humbugs, will now have a free hand. The final victory is certain, but circuitous paths, temporary and local errors—things which even now are so unavoidable—will become more common than ever. Well, we must see it through. What else are we here for?

And we are not losing courage yet.

Yours,
F. Engels.

